

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A medical suturing tool (10) comprising:

an insertion puncture needle (13) formed with an insertion hole (13a) extending from a proximal end to a distal end thereof;

a retrieval puncture needle (14) disposed substantially in parallel with the insertion puncture needle at a predetermined distance therefrom; [[and]]

a surgical suture (16) extending from the proximal end of the insertion puncture needle through the distal end and then engaged with the distal end of the retrieval puncture needle (14) via an engaging portion (15), wherein pulling on the suture causes the engaging portion to emerge from the insertion needle (13) and extend across to the retrieval needle (14) so that, with withdrawal of the retrieval needle (14), the suture is advanced from a puncture made by the insertion needle (13) to a puncture made by the retrieval needle (14)[[.]];

an elongate opening (18) provided on a surface of the insertion puncture needle (13) opposing to the retrieval puncture needle (14) in communication with the insertion hole (13a);

an engaging member (15) being capable of moving in the insertion hole of the insertion puncture needle and, when having reached a predetermined position in the insertion hole, bending from the side of the upper end portion thereof to project outside from the elongate opening; and

an engaging groove (19) provided on a surface of the retrieval puncture needle (14)

opposing to the insertion puncture needle (13), wherein the surgical suture (16) is connected to the lower end of the engaging member so that the suturing tool engages with the engaging groove on the retrieval puncture needle after having passed from the proximal end to the distal end of the insertion puncture needle together with the engaging member;

wherein the upper end portion (19a) of the engaging member is thicker than the lower side portion (19b) of the engaging member, the elongate opening of the insertion puncture needle (13) including a wide upper portion (18a) through which the upper end portion of the engaging member can pass and a narrow lower portion (18b) through which the upper end portion of the engaging member cannot pass and the lower side portion of the engaging member can pass, and the engaging groove of the retrieval puncture needle (14) including a wide upper portion (19a) through which the upper end portion of the engaging member can enter and a narrow lower portion (19) through which the upper end portion of the engaging member cannot pass but the lower side portion can enter.

Claim 2 (Canceled).

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): A tool according to claim [[2]] 1 wherein the engaging groove (19) includes a storage recess capable of accommodating the engaging member (15) and an engaged portion (19c) with which the upper end portion of the engaging member can engage.

Claim 4 (Canceled).

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A tool according to claim [[4]] 1, wherein the upper end portion (15a) of the engaging member comprises a spherical body and the lower side portion (15b) of the engaging member comprises a rod member having smaller diameter than the spherical body.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): A tool according to claim [[4]] 1, wherein an engaging wall is provided at the lower portion of the surface of the wide upper portion of the engaging groove of the retrieval puncture needle (14) so that the upper end portion of the engaging member is prevented from coming off toward the outside from the wide upper portion of the engaging groove.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): A tool according to claim [[2]] 1, wherein the portion on the distal side of the insertion puncture needle (13) with respect to the elongate opening and at least part of the retrieval puncture needle (14), other than the portion where the engaging groove is formed, is formed as a solid portion.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): A tool according to claim [[2]] 1, wherein at least a portion of the insertion puncture needle (13) where the elongate opening is formed and [[of]] at least a portion of the retrieval puncture needle (14) where the engaging groove is formed are formed into an angular C-shape in lateral cross section, respectively, and are arranged so that the open sides are opposed to each other.

Claim 9 (Original): A tool according to claim 1, wherein needle points of the insertion puncture needle (13) and the retrieval puncture needle (14) are formed into a pointed conical shape or a tapered thin blade shape.

Claim 10 (Original): A tool according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the insertion puncture needle (13) and the retrieval puncture needle (14) is formed by connecting a metal member and a resin member.

Claim 11 (Original): A tool according to claim 1, wherein the insertion puncture needle (13) and the retrieval puncture needle (14) are releasably attached to a retaining member (11, 12,

41).

Claim 12 (Original): A tool according to claim 11, wherein the retaining member is constituted of a grip member (41) to be held by a hand.

Claim 13 (Canceled).

Claim 14 (Previously Amended): A tool according to claim 11, wherein a plurality of pairs of the insertion puncture needle (13) and the retrieval puncture needle (14) are provided on the retaining member.

Claim 15 (Canceled).